



Lead and Copper

The next round of lead and copper sampling will occur between June and September 2006. Each of the four sub-regions that participate in regional monitoring will be required to take a total of 50 samples for the sub-region. SPU will determine the new allocation per participating utility and schedule sometime in the next couple months.

Consumer Confidence Reports

Consumer confidence report information was mailed to each utility that purchases water from SPU in early February. If you did not receive this information, please let us know. As always, these reports must be mailed to customers by July 1st of each year.

SPU Contact: Wylie Harper, 206 684-7880 or Lynn Kirby, 206 684-0216.

Conservation Technical Forum

On the web at <http://www.savingwater.org>

New WashWise POP Advertising in Stores Now

The new point-of-purchase advertising campaign is now in full swing at WashWise area retailers. New colorful banners that stand freely from the ground are now being used to educate customers about the benefits of purchasing a WashWise washer. In addition new colorful magnetic signs have been added to WashWise qualified washers in the showroom. The POP campaign was developed after surveys showed that most people don't think about the types of washers available until they show up to the dealer in need of one.



Water Quality Technical Forum Report

Chlorine Residual and Coliform Data

There was one positive coliform sample in purveyor areas during January 2006. Average chlorine residual concentrations in the purveyor distribution systems ranged from 0.3 to 1.2 mg/L, with an overall average of 0.9 mg/L. The target chlorine residual at the Tolt Treatment facility is 1.5 mg/L and the Cedar target residual is 1.4 mg/L. There have been very few samples with chlorine less than 0.2 mg/L and no positive HPC samples.

Taste and Odor

The taste and odor panel is meeting every other week. Samples are rated on a scale from 1 to 9, with 1 representing the best and 9 representing the worst. The taste and odor flavor rating assessment (FRA) for the Cedar supply (Lake Youngs treated) samples in January were both 1.4. The two Tolt supply results were 1.2 and 1.3 with a slight chlorinous taste. If you would like to receive a weekly update of the taste and odor panel results, please e-mail Moya Joubert at moya.joubert@seattle.gov. The spring algae bloom has just started in Lake Youngs. The algae have not been affecting the taste, but may cause an increase in filter clogging calls.

New Watering Index to debut on KOMO TV News

A new watering index is being developed with KOMO TV to be used during the weather segments in nightly newscasts. The watering index will be used to inform residential customers how much they should water each day. The plan is for weather casters such as Steve Pool to announce each day's percentage of the index, saying something such as "today's water index is 55 percent." The information would be reinforced by an education campaign to help homeowners understand the index. KOMO is piloting the index concept. It is hoped all the other TV stations will want to add the watering index information to their daily weather segments.

YOUTH EDUCATION

Upgrades Planned for Youth Ed Web Page

Making on-line learning fun and rewarding for kids is the goal of a planned web page upgrade. It is being driven by the positive response to the Waterbusters conservation game, and the need to make it more user-friendly. Upgrades are being developed to provide easy access to a variety of existing downloadable games and activities as well as links to new ones contained on other sites. The page will be linked to the existing Teachers and Kids page and should be completed in time for summer home use. It will coincide with this year's planned television ad campaign for Waterbusters.

RESIDENTIAL INDOOR

Showerhead and Aerator Replacement Program

After reviewing the evaluation results of the showerhead and aerator replacement pilot program conducted in 2005, the decision has been made to proceed with a regional distribution. Customers that participated in the pilot programs are very happy with the new better than code plumbing fixtures they received. Staff will begin requesting single family data from wholesales partners in the second week of March in order to prepare a mailing inviting customer to receive a free showerhead and faucet aerator.

The data that will be requested is name, address, and zip code of single family customers in your service territory. Using direct-mail service we will send them a brochure explaining the benefits to their family by exchanging the old showerhead and aerator, for the new better than code fixtures. Thanks to Highline Water District and Water District 119 for allowing us to pilot the program in their service territory. More detail of the regional program will be forth coming.

WashWise Rebate Processing Outsourcing

Outsourcing of WashWise rebate processing is currently being negotiated with Portland Energy Conservation, Inc. (PECI) in Portland, Oregon to gain efficiencies and to manage staffing adjustments following SPU reorganization. PECI currently processes rebates for Cascade Water Alliance and Puget Sound Energy, and have proven to be capable of providing a quick turn-around of rebates, great follow-up and overall good management. Rebates processed in 2005 totaled 6,466 with 36.5% of rebates from purveyor areas.

Multi-Family Toilet Rebate Program

The MFTR program will continue through June 30, 2006 with no significant changes planned at this time. Properties with four or more units that have not replaced their toilets prior to 1992 are eligible for either the free toilet (Toto or Western Pottery model) provided by SWP, or an \$80 rebate for each toilet replaced. Total number of toilets installed for 2005 was 4,676 in 283 buildings throughout the Saving Water Partnership territory.

RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPE

Spring Savvy Gardener Classes to be Offered in 2006

Staff is lining up classes for the 2006 spring series. This year, the classes will be incorporated into the Northwest Natural Yard Days promotion (April 15 – May 15). Both the classes and the Yard Days promotion are aimed at encouraging residential gardeners to use products and practices that

conserve and protect natural resources. Class topics, speakers and venues will be finalized by March 1, with the class schedule posted on savingwater.org by March 15.

Benchmark Conservation Survey to be Conducted in 2006

Planning for a regional water survey is now underway, to assess attitudes and behaviors relating to water use and conservation. The first such survey since 2001, this “benchmarking” survey will again cover both direct and wholesale service areas. We are working with a consultant and will involve our wholesale partners in planning.

New Landscapes

RC staff is providing limited technical assistance, via consultant, to developers who wish to make landscapes in new commercial/multi-family construction more water efficient. Wholesale customers are welcome to contact the RC project manager if they have projects in their service areas for which they would like to request technical assistance for landscape water conservation. The technical assistance includes review and comments on plans for soils, irrigation design and plant selection.

COMMERCIAL

Irrigation Contractor Trainings Big Hit!

Over 50 contractors and facility maintenance personnel attended a variety of irrigation trainings sponsored by SWP and the Washington Irrigation Contractors Association (WICA). Classes offered included the Irrigation Water Management Societies' (www.iwms.org) Site Water Management Planning course and certification, the Irrigation Association's Drip Irrigation course, and the new SWP Irrigation Scheduling course designed specifically to utilize the www.iwms.org on-line irrigation scheduling tools for the SWP area. Additional training opportunities will be available in June of this year.

Ongoing Commercial Projects in SWP Area

As a reminder to all there are two really good water saving programs ongoing in your territory. First is the Commercial Washer Replacement Program. With the help of our partner Puget Sound Energy (PSE) SWP is offering incentives to Laundromats that replace old inefficient washing machine with new efficient ones. Laundromat owners can expect \$300 from SWP and \$200 from PSE per machine. The list of qualifying machines can be found at; <http://cee1.org/>.

The second program is Commercial Toilet Replacement. Businesses can replace their old pre-1994 toilets with new water saving toilets. Business owners can choose either an \$80. rebate option or a free toilet option. Those wanting to participate can look at the “FlushStar” list posted at www.savingwater.org for toilets that best fit their business needs. If you know of any business owners that would like to participate in either program please contact Arece Hampton.

GUEST COLUMNIST

The following article appeared in the February 16, 2006 edition of the Seattle PI.

Wasteful showerheads soak us all

by Al Dietemann, SPU.

A serious threat to decades of conservation gains in the Puget Sound region has appeared in the marketplace: water-guzzling, outlaw showerheads. To replace the energy and water wasted by these high-flow plumbing fixtures, utilities may be forced to add new capacity -- such as new and expensive water supply sources -- that will effectively drive up utility rates for everyone. Such waste also has environmental consequences.

Here's a little-known fact: Thanks to the conservation efforts of Seattle-area customers, the region is using less drinking water per day, overall, than was used in the early 1970s. This success happened in spite of substantial regional

population and economic growth. Much of the water and energy savings occurred from widespread customer installation of water- and energy-efficient showerheads over the past 10 years.

Concerned about the marketing of new “fire hose” showerheads and shower “waterfalls,” Seattle Public Utilities recently tested flow rates for a number of these products.

Many of the suspect showerheads appeared to exceed the maximum legal water flow rate of 2.5 gallons per minute established by the 1992 Federal Energy Act -- a suspicion confirmed by formal analysis at a certified, independent lab.

The lab results, forwarded to the U.S. Department of Energy, show that the products exceed the federal maximum water flow rate limit by “as much as five times.”

Why should anyone care about this, and why is it anyone's business what kind of showerheads folks use in the privacy of their own homes? The answer is simple: When water is wasted, we all pay. Installation of water- and energy-wasting showerheads has the potential to wipe out much of the savings obtained by customers who currently use efficient showerheads.

For example, if only 3 percent of all households in our region install water-guzzling showerheads, the showerhead savings of the other 97 percent of households will be largely negated. To put it another way, the savings from 29 efficient households are lost for each household that

installs a wasteful showerhead. Additionally, households that install wasteful showerheads can expect to pay hundreds of extra dollars a year in water and energy costs.

Seattle and partnering local water utilities are committed to reducing personal and business water consumption by 1 percent every year for 10 years, through 2010. The goal for 2005 was a savings of 1.2 million gallons of water per day, an amount roughly equal to the increase in new demands for water from increasing regional population and economic growth--but without the high cost of developing new water resources. To put these savings into perspective, the cost to develop 1.2 million gallons per day of new water supply is an estimated \$5 million.

Manufacturer compliance with the required federal flow rate is a key strategy to ensure that only water-efficient showerheads can be bought and that customers won't knowingly or unknowingly install water-wasting showerheads. By asking the U.S. Department of Energy to seek sanctions against the manufacturers of water-guzzling plumbing fixtures, the city of Seattle is providing national leadership that should save utility ratepayers money while retaining hard-won environmental benefits. Al Dietemann leads residential and commercial water conservation for Seattle Public Utilities. The Saving Water Partnership is comprised of Seattle Public Utilities and 17 area water utilities that buy wholesale water from the city of Seattle.